

THE MELFORD RURAL DISTRICT,

IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF WEST SUFFOLK.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1918.

Population, (1911) 12791. (1917) 10696. Area, 49850 acres. Number of parishes, 22.

Number of Inhabited Houses, 3173. Number of persons per house, 3.4.

The following vital statistics have been compiled from the returns sent to me from the different Registrars in the District :—

THE BIRTHS.

The number of births registered during the year was 176, equivalent to a birth rate of 16.4 per 1000 of the present population. During the previous seven years they were :—

	1911.	1912.	1913.	1914.	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.
Births.....	257	222	244	222	233	213	148	176
Birth rate	20.0	17.3	18.9	17.2	18.2	16.6	13.8	16.4

THE DEATHS.

The number registered in the District during the year was 160, to which have to be added the deaths of 36 residents who died in the Sudbury Workhouse and elsewhere; and from this has to be deducted the deaths of 15 non-residents in the Nayland and Chilton Sanatoriums, making the nett deaths 181, equivalent to a death rate of 16.5 per 1000. The previous seven years were :—

	1911.	1912.	1913.	1914.	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.
Deaths registered	152	179	157	175	195	210	161	160
Deaths belonging to the District	179	193	174	189	212	198	160	181
Death rate	13.9	15.0	13.5	14.6	16.4	15.4	14.9	16.5

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

The deaths registered of children under one year of age numbered 10. For the previous seven years were :—

	1911.	1912.	1913.	1914.	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.
Death of children under one year	19	14	15	15	21	11	13	10
Rate per 1000 of births registered	73.8	63.0	65.6	67.5	90.1	51.6	87.8	56.7

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.

SCARLET FEVER. Only one case occurred: a boy, who attended a school outside this district, where some cases happened.

MEASLES. During the spring several parishes had some cases among the school children, but no epidemic, no deaths.

TUBERCULOSIS. Pulmonary: 22 cases were notified, of these 9 died; the houses were disinfected afterwards: 12 of the cases were removed to the Bury Sanatorium by the County Tuberculosis Officer, 4 were discharged soldiers; all were benefited. Other forms of tuberculosis notified were 7 affecting glands and peritoneum: 3 of the latter died.

OTHER INFECTIOUS DISEASES. Influenza: this serious epidemic became very prevalent during November—December, the pneumonic form causing 36 deaths. All the schools except three had to be closed until after the Christmas holidays; the epidemic had then subsided.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

The District and Maternity Nurses in several of the parishes render valuable service to expectant mothers, and in the care and feeding of infants. The School for Mothers in the parish of Long Melford has been most useful. More Maternity Nurses are much required.

HOUSES OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

The following table shows the work done under Part I. of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1909.

1. Number of dwelling houses inspected under Section 17 of the Act	340
2. " considered to be so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ...	3
3. Number of representations made to the Local Authority with a view to the making of closing orders	3
4. The number of closing orders made	3
5. The number of dwelling houses the defects in which were remedied without making closing orders	12
6. The number of dwelling houses which after making closing orders were put into a fit state for human habitation	—
7. The number of dwelling houses voluntarily closed	—
" " " " " demolished	—
" " " " " now under repair	2

The general character of the defects found to exist were in most cases structural, as defective roofs, eaves, gutters, walls, chimneys, and dampness of floors, ceilings and walls. Improvement in the ventilation of 12 houses was effected by having sealed windows made to open. Four new houses have been erected.

NEW HOUSES REQUIRED.

A Housing Committee was appointed, and they reported to the general Council, the need of 202 new houses for the working classes in this district. Arrangements are being considered as to suitable sites.

GENERAL SANITATION.

Number of Nuisances remedied ..	182
New Drains tested ...	4
Houses and Schools disinfected...	20
Overcrowding abated ...	3
Dairies and Cowsheds inspected periodically ...	32
Slaughter Houses .. "	16

Refuse collection and general scavenging is carried on satisfactorily in the parishes of Long Melford and Bures.

Systematic as well as general inspections have been made throughout the district by the Inspector of Nuisances, Mr. G. F. Rampling, who has carried out his many official duties with great diligence and success.

J. SINCLAIR HOLDEN, M.D.,

Medical Officer of Health.